

greater than  $940 \text{ kg/m}^3$  and wherein the polyethylene-based composition comprises talc in an amount of less than 1 part per 100 parts by weight of polyethylene.--

--27. The article of Claim 26, wherein said exhibits a particle size distribution situated between 0.2 and 15 microns and a mean particle size between 1 and 5 microns.--

--28. The article of Claim 26, comprising an amount of talc which is between 0.05 and 0.25 part per 100 parts by weight of polyethylene.--

--29 The article of Claim 26, wherein polyethylene is selected from the group consisting of ethylene homopolymer and ethylene copolymer containing, in total, from 0.01 to 10 mole % of at least one comonomer and exhibiting a standard density of greater than  $943 \text{ kg/m}^3$  and not exceeding  $960 \text{ kg/m}^3$  and a melt flow index, measured at  $190^\circ\text{C}$  under a load of 5 kg according to ISO Standard 1133 (1991), of 0.07 to 5g/10min.--

--30. An article of manufacture according to Claim 29, characterized in that the polyethylene is selected from the group consisting of ethylene copolymer containing, in total, from 0.05 to 5 mole % of butene and/or of hexene.--

--31. The article of manufacture of Claim 26, wherein said article is a pipe shaped by extrusion.--

--32. The article of manufacture of Claim 26, wherein said article is a pipe coupling shaped by injection.--

--33. The article of Claim 26, wherein talc is added in an amount effective to increase a creep resistance of said composition.--

--34. The article of manufacture of Claim 26, characterized in that the talc exhibits an essentially lamellar texture.--

--35. The article of manufacture of Claim 26, which is characterized by creep resistance (t), wherein t = creep resistance expressed in terms of time to fracture, measured according to ISO Standard 1167 (1996) at 20° C on a pipe having a diameter of 50 mm and a thickness of 3 mm and under a circumferential stress of 12.4.--

--36. (Amended) The article of manufacture of Claim 27, which is characterized by creep resistance (t), wherein t = creep resistance expressed in terms of time to fracture, measured according to ISO Standard 1167 (1996) at 20° C on a pipe having a diameter of 50 mm and a thickness of 3 mm and under a circumferential stress of 12.4.--

--37. The article of manufacture of Claim 26, wherein the polyethylene is high density polyethylene.--

--38. An article of manufacture selected from the group consisting of pipe and pipe coupling, which comprises polyethylene wherein the polyethylene exhibits a standard density, measured at 23°C according to ASTM Standard D 972, of greater than 940 kg.m<sup>3</sup> and talc in an amount which does not exceed 0.5 part per 100 parts by weight of polyethylene.--

--39. The article of manufacture of Claim 38, wherein talc is added in an amount effective to increase a creep resistance of said composition.--

--40. The article of manufacture of Claim 38, which is characterized by creep resistance (t), wherein t = creep resistance expressed in terms of time to fracture, measured according to ISO Standard 1167 (1996) at 20° C on a pipe having a diameter of 50 mm and a thickness of 3 mm and under a circumferential stress of 12.4.--